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Slavery and the University: Histories and Legacies

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Slavery and the University: Histories and Legacies

Emory University, February 3-5, 2011



In recent years, an increasing number of scholars and students have explored the profound historical entanglements and legacies of slavery and the slave trade at institutions of higher learning. In some instances, critical reexaminations of slavery in the history of educational institutions have been sponsored or facilitated by senior administrations; in other cases, this kind of historical research and "memory work" has been pursued without official sanction or encouragement. This work has also inspired activism and change within universities and in the communities that surround them. This conference explores the full range of historical intersections between slavery and higher education, past and present, as well as the acknowledged and unacknowledged legacies of slavery and slave trades in the Academy.

We encourage paper and panel proposals on a wide range of topics, including: The economic entanglement of universities in the slave trade and in slavery; The roles of colleges and universities in providing theological, legal and political legitimation for chattel slavery and the Atlantic Slave Trade; Universities and the construction of racial knowledge in support of slavery and Jim Crow; The contributions of enslaved persons in the building and maintenance of colleges and universities; The experiences of enslaved persons and their descendants at institutions of higher learning; Universities as contributors to and inhibitors of abolitionism; Academic freedom, slavery and anti-slavery; How ideas about slavery and emancipation in educational institutions became templates for those institutions' treatment of other groups (Native Americans, Native Hawaiians, other racial groups, women, imperial projects internationally); Remembering and forgetting slavery in the context of universities, including exhibitions, memorials, and commemorative ceremonies; The establishment of Historically Black Colleges and Universities as institutions addressing the aftermath of slavery and debates around the education of freedpeople; Memories and images of slavery at Historically Black Colleges and Universities; Strategies for engaging students and community members in documenting the history of slavery at institutions of higher learning; Literary and artistic engagements with slavery in university contexts; University Librarians and archivists and their experiences with this research; How these

histories inhibited or inspired institutional change throughout the twentieth century and today.

Review of paper and panel proposals will begin April 26, 2010. For individual papers, please submit an abstract of no more than 250 words. For panels, submit an overall abstract of no more than 500 words and individual paper descriptions of no more than 250 words each, in addition to a cover page with paper titles, presenters, and their affiliations. Each applicant should also include a two-page c.v. with current email contact. Please submit materials via email to Dr. Melissa Sexton at msexton@emory.edu. Dr. Melissa Sexton, Transforming Community Project, Emory University, Atlanta, GA; email: msexton@emory.edu; visit the website at <http://www.transform.emory.edu>.